

The Family Circle.

INTER STELLAS.

The bells of heavenly harmonies Ring ever in the self-same keys; But we, confused by care and fret, Have heard no strains of greeting yet.

The angels sing, as when of old That story of good will was told; But fail to pierce the boundless blue, For us whose songs are faint and few.

The starry eyes of spheres sublime Peer through the distances of time; But unto us, so weak of sight, They glitter in an unknown night.

We only know and only feel The sympathies our souls reveal; But angels sing within us, when We hear good will and peace to men.

And days shall come, not distant long, When sighing shall be changed to song, When the great heaven our rest shall be, And sight shall conquer mystery. SAMUEL W. DUFFIELD.

TRUTH THE BRIGHTEST GEM.

The clock struck five, the joyful hour for sister Emma's return from school.

"There she is," cried little George, who was weary with long watching at the window. "Do let me run to the brook, dear mother, and meet her."

The permission was given, and away he ran to throw his arms around his kind sister Emma.

"But what is the matter, sister?" inquired the little boy, as he held up his lips for the kiss.

"Oh, not much," was the answer—for just then Emma's heart was too full to permit her to say "much." They soon reached the parlor, but Emma's sorrowful looks did not escape her mother's notice. She did not, however, ask any questions, for Emma always felt that her mother was the best friend in the world, and was accustomed to go to her with all her perplexities.

At tea, Emma was silent, and little George was much puzzled to find his sister so indifferent to his stories about his kitten, and Ross, the little dog; nor did she smile as usual, when she heard that he had been "an industrious boy at his lessons." No, Emma could not smile: her heart was heavy; and yet, perhaps, some of my readers will wonder, at it when they hear how very small a thing could so much disturb the happy girl. Emma had that day sinned against her conscience. She was usually in the habit of listening to the voice of this friend in her bosom, and obeying it; and so her days passed happily. There was in her face the sunshine of the soul, so that one felt happy in looking at her. The time appeared very long before George went to bed; at last all was still, and Emma found her mother alone in the parlor, ready, as she always was, to hear her troubles, and pour into her spirit the balm of consolation.

"Dear mother, I have sinned against my conscience to-day, and I have been so miserable." Poor Emma, could say no more. "Tell me Emma," said her mother calmly, "what has been the difficulty?"

"Why, mother, it was only a sum I had to do in division. When I was trying to prove it, I could not possibly make it compare with the answer, and so I put down the right figures, and carried them to my teacher. She looked at it a moment, and then said, 'Emma, did you add up this sum?' 'Yes,' I replied. 'How then does it appear that every figure is wrong?' I told her the truth then, but she looked at me with a good deal of compassion, and told me she had supposed I was a girl of integrity; but I had now tried to deceive her, and had displeased God! Oh, mother, I was never so unhappy in my life; what shall I do? I do not know how I could do such a thing; I have grieved the Saviour, and Miss Carlton thinks I am a deceitful girl."

"I am grieved for you, my child; for in this instance you have stepped from God's path of truth—that pleasant path, which had, to you, Emma, been a path of peace. But I do not think you a deceitful girl. A sudden and powerful temptation presented, and in a moment you swerved into the dark and forbidden way whose sharp thorns and briars have already pierced and wounded you."

"Oh, mother, how true it is, that the way of transgressors is hard! I have been unable to study or play, or do anything but think of my wicked heart."

"Emma, there is a balm for your wounded spirit. If you feel that you have sinned against God, and are really penitent—which always implies a determination with his assistance, to do so no more, to be a child of truth, to delight in it just as he does—then he will receive and love you as before. You know the way to the Saviour, Emma."

Such bitterness of soul Emma never experienced again. She was forgiven by her Saviour, by her teacher, and her affectionate mother. Truth had long sparkled like a beautiful diamond on her fair brow, and although its lustre was obscure for a moment, it shone out in new beauty. It became a shield and breastplate by which she was enabled to ward off the attacks of temptation. The sorrowful day was never forgotten. The way of sin was so dark and fearful, leading down to the chambers of death, that Emma blessed God for leading her back so quickly into the sweet paths of truth. Mother's Magazine.

WHY CHRIST CAME AS A BABE.

"There is one thing," said Wynnie, after a pause, "that I have often thought about—why it was necessary for Jesus to come as a babe; he could not do anything for so long."

"First, I would answer, Wynnie, that if you would tell me why it is necessary for all of us to come as babes, it would be less necessary for me to tell you why he came so; whatever was human must be his. But I must say next, are you sure that he could not do anything for so long? Does a baby do nothing? Ask mamma there. Is it for nothing that the mother lifts up such heartfuls of thanks to God for the baby on her knee? Is it nothing that the baby opens such fountains of love in almost all the hearts around it? Ah! you do not think how much every baby has to do with the saving of the world—the saving of it from selfishness, and folly and greed."

"And for Jesus, was he not going to establish the reign of love in the earth? How could he do better than begin from babyhood? He had to lay hold of the heart of the world. How could he do better than begin with his mother's—the best one in it? Through his mother's love first, he grew into the world. It was first by the door of all holy relations of the family that he entered the human world, laying hold of mother, father, brothers, sisters, all his friends; then by the door of labor, for he took his share of his father's work; then, when he was thirty years of age, by the door of teaching; by kind deeds, and sufferings, and through all by obedience unto the death. You must not think that the grand thirty years wherein he got ready for the chief work to follow. You must not think that while he was thus preparing for his public ministrations, he was not all the time saving the world even by that which he was in the midst of it, ever laying hold of it more and more. These were things not so easy to tell. And you must remember that our records are very scanty. It is a small biography we have of a man who became—the Son of Man. No doubt it is enough, or God would have told us more; but surely we are not to suppose that there was nothing significant, nothing of saving power in that which we are not told. Charlie, wouldn't you have liked to see the little baby Jesus?"

"Yes, that I would. I would have given him my white rabbit with pink eyes." "That is what the great painter Titian must have thought Charlie; for he has painted him playing with a rabbit—not such a pretty one as yours." "I would have carried him about all day," said Dora. "As little Henry Parsons does his baby brother."

"Did he have any brother or sister to carry him about, papa?" asked Harry. "No, my boy; for he was the eldest. But you may be pretty sure he carried about his brothers and sisters that came after him."

"Wouldn't he take care of them just?" said Charlie. "I wish I had been one of them," said Constance. "You are one of them, my Connie. Now he is so great and so strong that he can carry father and mother and all of us in his bosom."

"Then we sung a child's hymn in praise of the God of little children, and then the little ones went to bed.—The Seaboard Parish in the Sunday Magazine.

[The idea here presented by Mr. Macdonald is not as new as it is true. Irenaeus—who studied at the feet of Polycarp, the pupil of the Apostle John—says of Christ: 'He came to redeem all by Himself; all who through Him are regenerated unto God; infants, little children, boys, young men and old.' Hence he passed through every age, and to the infants he became an infant, sanctifying the infants; among the little children, he became a little child sanctifying those who belong to this age, and at the same time becoming an example of filial goodness and obedience to them; among the young men he became a youth, being made an example to youth, and sanctifying them unto the Lord.]

REV. ALBERT BARNES.

[The meagre reports of public rumor, so unsatisfying to those deeply interested in this great and good man, have elicited the following facts from his own pen. X. D. H.]

"I am forbidden to write, and I am now writing this with my eyes closed, by the aid of a machine, the same which Mr. Prescott used, in writing his histories. Even this I do at some peril of blindness: My general health is perfect. As perfect as it could be, at my time of life—now in my seventieth year. I am able to do as much work as ever without fatigue. My only difficulty is with my eyes, and there the difficulty is a serious and alarming one. I am threatened with blindness, and am commanded not to read, or write, or preach, or think."

"I was very well all last winter, did all my ordinary work, and the extra work of my Lectures (Evidences of Christianity) and was using my eyes very moderately and quite comfortably, until August, when suddenly and unexpectedly, alarming symptoms, consisting of flashes of light appeared; and I thought it necessary to consult my physicians. I did so, and was commanded to stop at once, on penalty of total blindness. I therefore resigned my pastoral office."

[Then follow facts of which the public are already informed. At a much later date, April 21, 1868, he again writes:]

"I am not, as yet, afflicted with total blindness, and I still hope that I may be saved from that calamity, though there are alarming indications, increasing rather than diminishing, that if I live much longer, I shall be; and that I may end my course, as

not a few do—as a blind old man. Perhaps it will make the exceeding splendor of heaven, if I am permitted to behold it, more glorious to my view.

My son, as I told you, reads to me, but that leaves many hours heavy and unoccupied. I have, however, much to interest me in my garden, (Eden's Bank—his summer home.) Now that I have not anything to employ myself about, I am endeavoring to put my grounds in a better and more tasteful order than they have been heretofore. At least a very innocent employment and a means of grace. Why not? A man ought to be the better for seeing the works of God all around him, and by seeing those works developed under the operation of his own hands.

Those who have seen 'Eden's Bank' can scarcely conceive it possible. No man can make a flower bloom, but one may be an instrument of causing one to bloom, where otherwise there would be none, and thus bring out, so to speak, a new manifestation of the power, the skill and the goodness of God.

When I received your letter I had just returned from a 'residence' in the Dominion of Canada, where I had gone to secure a copyright of my Notes on the Psalms, in England. I had ample opportunity to understand the capabilities of that climate in regard to temperature, for they all said, that this has been the coldest winter that had ever been known in Canada.

The first volume of this work has been published in London, and will be issued with all convenient despatch in this country. This completes my work on the bible, a work which has occupied my leisure hours for forty years—which has been to me, an unending source of enjoyment, and which has met with a degree of success which I never expected or hoped for. The mere result of Sovereign goodness and grace.—Congregationalist and Recorder.

SATURDAY EVENING.

Have you ever noticed the bustle that usually prevails on Saturday evening? There are clean clothes to be looked out, and aired garments to be mended, others to be put away, and the house must be cleaned and put in order. Calling at a persons house on Saturday afternoon, she said, 'Ah ma'am, you see I am busy cleaning to-day, so as to have all tidy for Sunday.' 'Yes,' I replied, 'if all took the same pains to examine their hearts as they do to clean their houses, how much more would they be fitted to enjoy the coming rest.' To this she assented with a 'You're right, ma'am.' Now I wonder, dear children, if when you put your playthings all away, you try to put evil thoughts away also? I do not mean to say that you may indulge in sinful thoughts all the week, and then put them away on Saturday night as you do your toys, intending to bring them forth on Monday morning again—no, no! I want you to examine your hearts, and, if there are evil or sinful thoughts in them, then pray God to remove them, and prepare you to receive Sabbath instructions. As the house is carefully swept that it may be clean for Sunday, so do you try, with God's help, to sweep away every unkind or ill feeling from your hearts. If you have quarrelled with any of your young companions, ask them to forgive you; and pray for a blessing on the coming Sabbath. A little boy said to me one Sunday morning; 'I have a clean coat, clean collar, all my things are clean.' I then said, 'Have you a clean heart?' at which question he was silent, he did not know what to answer. Now you cannot give yourselves clean hearts, but you can pray God to wash them in the blood of Jesus, then they will be clean. Clean coats and clean frocks look very well, but a clean heart you want more than any of these. Next Saturday evening, if you are alive, do not forget to look at your heart, little boy or girl who may happen to read this; and, by constantly doing so with prayer, you will find it will keep you from much sin, besides helping you to enjoy and profit by the Sabbath.

QUEER FISH.

The Tribune's Alaska correspondent gives an account of a fish that is put to queer uses:

"I must not omit the existence and peculiarities of another fish—one not mentioned in the books—which is found in great numbers in the coast rivers, from the Nass to the Stickeen. It appears annually about the first week in May, and Mr. Ansley, the pilot of the John L. Stephens, says that on some days he has known it difficult to row a boat across the mouth of the Nass River on account of the dense mass of these fish in the water. Sometimes an adverse tide or heavy wind lodges tons of them upon the shore. The Indians know of their arrival by the flight of the birds northward. They seldom continue over fifteen days, and during this time the natives from Fort Simpson and all the adjacent regions haste to the feast of fat things. This fish is six to eight inches long, in form resembles the smelt, has a shining and almost transparent appearance, and of all the finny tribes is the most fat. Its fat has not the oily, rancid taste of other fish, but has the sweet taste of fresh lard. The Indians store great quantities of it, and if well cared for it remains sweet for months. When they are dried, the Indians often turn to a novel and practical account—burn them in the place of candles. They give a clear, brilliant light, and are not liable to be blown out by the wind. Mr. Manson, the Superintendent at Fort Simpson, says that the tail should be lighted instead of the head, and that each fish will last about fifteen minutes. In a dark night the men who took natives for guides, used to reckon a mile of travel, for every five fish burned."

THE RIGHT WAY TO BEGIN.

A little girl once said, "Oh, mother, how very hard it is to do right! I don't believe I shall ever be able."

"Have you really tried, my dear?"

"Oh, yes; I try every day. When I awake, before I get up, I say to myself, 'I will be good all the day; I will be gentle and kind; I will obey my parents and teachers; I will not quarrel; I will always tell the truth.' But then, mother, I don't know how it is, I do so often forget. Then, when evening comes, I have to say, 'There now! what is the use of trying? I have been in a passion; I have been disobedient; and once or twice, mother, you know, I have said what was not true.' The dear child seemed very much ashamed while saying this, so her mother looked kindly at her, and only said, "My dear, I do not think you have begun right." The little girl looked up wonderingly; and her parent went on—"The first thing is to have a new heart; and have you asked for this?" "No, mother, I am afraid not." "Then, my child, do so at once. Good fruit you know, can only come from a good tree. If your heart is wrong your conduct will be wrong. You cannot make it right yourself, with all your good resolutions; but ask God, for Christ's sake, to help you. He will give you His Holy Spirit, and you will not find it any longer impossible to do right." I am glad to say that the child took her mother's advice. That very day she asked God, earnestly, to change her heart, and help her to do right. She prayed, she watched, she strove hard against her sins, and was able, by God's grace, to lead the life of a lovely young Christian.

HOW PAPER IS MADE IN CHINA.

Most of the paper used in China is made from the bark of various trees and plants, and from the bamboo. The manufacture of bamboo paper is carried on extensively in the southern part of the country. In selecting stock from the bamboo plantations on the mountains, preference is given to the stems which are about to put out branches and leaves. Early in the month of June the canes are cut into pieces from five to seven feet long, and placed in a pit which is supplied with water. After soaking for several weeks, the canes are beaten with mallets, in order to remove the thick bark and green skin. The remaining filaments, resembling a fine sort of hemp, are treated with lime and water raised to a certain temperature. After remaining in this bath for about a week, the filaments are removed, washed with cold water, passed through a ley made of wood ashes, and then placed in a boiler. This process is repeated until the material begins to grow putrid, when it is transferred to a mortar, and pounded into pulp by means of water-power; after which the mass is treated to bleaching powder. The pulp thus prepared is made by hand into sheets of various thicknesses by means of a silk tissue within a light frame, upon which the workman places the required quantity of pulp. When the water has run off from the corners of the frame, he turns the sheet over on to a large table, when it is pressed. Each sheet is afterward raised and dried separately in a kiln made for that purpose.

Writing paper is made from the finest part of the bamboo material. Another kind is made by mixing rice-straw with the bamboo fiber. A very strong paper used for window-blinds and other articles, which in this country are generally constructed of woven substances, is made by mixing 60 per cent of the bark obtained from a tree called tchou with 40 per cent of bamboo material. Another variety of strong paper is obtained from the bark of the mulberry tree, and is used in the breeding and culture of silkworms. The same material, made from thinner pulp, is employed in the manufacture of umbrellas, fans, and firecreens. Bark paper which is to be painted is first passed through a solution of alum-water; to destroy the fine filaments which are commonly found on the upper side of the sheet as it lies in the silk tissue frame—the lower side in contact with the tissue being much more smooth. For many uses, when only one color is required, the material is added to the pulp.

A NOBLE DEED.

The following incident was related to the Coadjutor Bishop of Newfoundland, by one of the survivors of the terrible storm on the Labrador in October last:

"A poor boy, whose name no one knows, but we may hope, that it is in the Book of Life, found three little children who, like himself, had been washed ashore from one of the many wrecks, wandering along that dreary coast in the driving sleet. They were crying bitterly, having been parted from their parents, and not knowing whether they were drowned or saved. The poor lad took them to a sheltered spot, plucked moss for them, and made them a rude but soft bed, and then taking off his own coat to cover them, sat by them all the night long, soothing their terror until they fell asleep. In the morning, leaving them still sleeping, he went in search of the parents, and to his great joy, met them looking for their children, whom they had given up for dead. He directed them where to find them, and then went on himself to try to find some place of shelter and refreshment. But when the parents were returning with their recovered little ones, they found their brave preserver lying quite dead upon the snow, not far from where they parted from him. The long exposure in his exhausted state was too much for his little strength, and having saved his little charge—a stranger to them, as they to him—he lay down to die."

ALL the world has admired the offering of Abraham; what may not come to pass since God has offered His own Son?—Luther.

It is a great mercy of God not to hear men if they offer unjust prayers.—Queenel.

Rural Economy.

DRIVING THE COW.

BY MARIAN DOUGLAS.

The grass is green on Billy's grave, The snow is on my brow, But I remember still the night When we two drove the cow! The buttercups and tangled weeds, The goldfinch pecking thistle seeds, The small green snake amid the brake, The white flowers on the bough, And Billy, with his keen, gray eyes,— I seem to see them now!

O, Billy, was my first of friends; Our hearts were warm and light; The darkest of November rains Had shared with him, seemed bright; And far too brief for boyish play Had the summer's longest day. But powerless fell love's magic spell,— Its charm was lost that night; It needed but one word, and we Were both in for a fight! One word! 'twas Billy spoke that word; But, sore at heart, I knew It was another hand than his That dealt the earliest blow. He touched my forehead's longest curl, And said, 'Ha! John! my pretty girl!' A jest or not, my blood was hot, My cheek was all aglow; 'Take that! Take that! Say, could a girl, A girl, have struck you so?'

But Billy was as stout as I; The scar upon my brow The memory of his prowess keeps Before me even now! His furious blows fell thick and fast; But just as I had thought, at last, 'That yield I must, a skilful thrust I gave, I know not how, And, a triumphant conqueror, I went on for my cow!

We never were firm friends again. Before the spring-time air Again the graveyard flowers made sweet, Poor Billy rested there! And I since then have wandered wide, And seen the world on every side, By land and sea, and learned—ah me!—That warm, true hearts are rare; And he who is best loved on earth Has not one friend to spare!

The grass is green on Billy's grave, My brow is white with snow; I never can win back again The love I used to know! The past is sweet; but, though for me Its joys are past in memory, 'Tis only pain to call again The feuds of long ago, And worse to feel that in a fight I dealt the earliest blow!

—Our Young Folks.

CURE FOR THE CATTLE PLAGUE.

Chloride of copper is now extensively used in Germany against the cattle plague. The practice is to dissolve 8 grammes of crystallized chloride of copper in 2 kilograms of alcohol, and with this solution to wet a pad of cotton, which is then laid on a plate and burned in the centre of a stable, the heads of the animals being turned toward the plate so as to breathe the fumes. This operation is performed morning and evening; one pad is burned for every three head of cattle. The solution is also administered internally, with the addition of 15 grammes of chloroform for the above named quantity. A teaspoonful of this liquid is mixed with each animal's drink three times a day.

HOW TO KEEP UP YOUR HAY CROP.

A farmer who had been in the habit of selling his hay for many years in succession, being asked how he kept up his hay crop without manuring or cultivating his land, replied, "I never allow the after-sward to be cut." If this rule was generally followed, there would be less said about running out of grass fields, or short crops of hay. Some farmers feed off every green thing, and compel their cattle to pull up and gnaw off the roots of the grass. Cutting rye is certain death to hay crops. A farmer had better buy hay at forty dollars per ton than ruin his hay field by close grazing. The general treatment of grass land in this respect is wrong and expensive, and should be abandoned as a matter of profit and economy.—Wisconsin Farmer.

TO CLEAR A HOUSE OF VERMIN.

"Burleigh," of the Boston Journal, says: "I tell you, ladies, a secret that may be worth your knowing—a new remedy has been found. So complete is the remedy that men offer to rid the premises of all these pestiferous nuisances by contract. The article is sold under the name of French green and other high sounding names, and at quite a high price. But the article, in plain English, is common green paint in powder. Six cents' worth used about any house will clear the kitchen, and all its surroundings. These pests invest many houses in this city, ad nauseam, and we believe the ladies will thank us for suggesting so cheap an eradicator."

The principal of a school in the interior of Missouri having resigned, the following application was made for the position:

"MACON CITY, Jan. 14th, 1868. 'Sir, hearing that the Professor of your high School was about to resign. I therefore solicit your patronage, and think I can fill the place. If you wish a teacher please give me call I can teach all branches you require. Please address soon— Kansas City, Mo."

The answer to this application is not recorded.